

The Man Nobody Knew

By HOLWORTHY HALL

CHAPTER XII—Continued.

"Oh, he's going to take a look at it on his way West," said Hilliard, diffidently, and added, with more generosity than Waring had anticipated. "Rufus and Jack—handle it together. Between them, they'll make rather an exhaustive study, don't you think? And they might turn up something that all of us would want to know."

"That's right! It's a thought. Well—Cullen looked at his watch. "I can't waste any more time on this tomfool business. I ought to have been in the office an hour ago. Anybody going downtown?"

"I am—but I'll walk," said Waring sullenly. "Can I stay?" asked Hilliard of Angela, in an undertone. "I want you to," she said. Her eyes followed Waring to the doorway.

After they had been alone for a full minute, and neither of them had uttered a syllable, it came to Hilliard that the chief difficulty in being evil is to make an end of it, but that the chief difficulty in being virtuous is to begin. His brain was active and his emotions were placid; but to his mild perplexity he had no compelling desire to make a start. There was no restraining impediment working against him, as on the occasion of his interview with Carol; his impulses were merely lazy. Indeed, he was rather highly gratified at the course of things this morning; he argued that Waring's zeal and Armstrong's itinerancy had relieved him from any necessity of an out-and-out avowal of his innocent fraud; it was much more satisfactory, since all the issues were so confused, to turn his affairs over to Cullen, and to await the inevitable verdict on an impersonal basis. In the meantime, he was deeply touched by Cullen's confidence in him; Cullen and Carol Durant alike had refused to believe the obvious truth; he wondered stolidly what it would have meant to him to have had such a reputation from his youth onward; the gratification now would have been superlative—provided only that he had been entitled to his pride.

"He's jealous of you," said Angela abruptly. "That's all—his jealousy. Simply wild with it. You know that—don't you?"

Hilliard started; for it wasn't an emboldening beginning. Not the least so; it implied exactly the sort of rivalry which he had feared, and which he had come to relinquish.

"Who is? Oh! Rufus Waring?" "Terribly jealous. Perfectly crazy with it. That's what all this whole mess is about." She tossed her head willfully. "I don't care; do you?"

The unreserved bluntness of it nearly took him off his feet; renewing the devastating suspicion that Angela had grown to care too much for him—too much for her own good.

"Why, Angela!" he said lamely. "Of course I do. It hurts me." She hammered a gold-embroidered sofa-cushion with one tiny fist.

"Oh, he's jealous of everything and everybody. That doesn't count any more. Only it made me perfectly furious. . . . I wanted to scratch him. . . . the very idea of his daring to say anything like that about you! Even if you do like me a lot!" She sighed heavily. "And yet if you stop to think about it, it was sort of brave, too—standing up to all of us when it was three to one, and he was wrong—poor dear!"

Hilliard looked down at her with deep affection and troubled relief. "As long as I've a defender like you I wouldn't worry," he said, "but I'm afraid it won't be for so very long. Angela, that you'll feel like defending me."

"Why not?" she asked. "Just a notion of mine. It strikes me that you're fonder of Rufus than you let yourself think. And he needs a champion worse than I do; I'm more used to taking care of myself."

The corners of her mouth were peculiarly sensitive. "Such a queer notion!" she said. "Where'd you ever get it?" "Oh, it came of its own accord. . . ."

"It's been such a funny day," she said, musing. "Rufus was funny, and Dad was funny, and you're so funny, and Carol was funny this morning, and I'm funny now, and—"

"Carol!" he echoed involuntarily. She laughed at him, enjoying his discomfort with the sweet insolence of a naughty juvenile; and it was noteworthy that her arraignment of Waring stopped short at this point.

"I know something about you!" she taunted wickedly. "What do you know, bright child?" he demanded, red to the temples. "I know!" Her tone was singing. "So do you! Look at the man bluish! Why, you guilty thing! Why, you red geranium!"

He sat down beside her, staring at her vivid, flower-like face. "Angela, you little demon, stop laughing at me!" "It was fresh incentive; she only bubbled the more. "I told you I'd laugh at you some

time," she reminded him triumphantly. "and this is the time!"

"I know so!" All at once she became demurely sober. "I'm awfully glad, honestly. . . . It isn't out yet, of course, but everybody knows about you and Carol, especially since Jack Armstrong lost out, and went West. Just the way they do in novels. I'm just as glad as I can be. Only you might have given me a wee little hint—just to me, you know, mightn't you?"

"Angela!" He caught at her hand. "Oh! That wakes you up, doesn't it?" Her manner changed to the maternal; if Hilliard had been in a different frame of mind it would have convulsed him. "Now, just be calm and tell me all about it," she instructed him indulgently. "Tell me everything—I won't repeat it to a single soul! I'm awfully excited about it. Please tell me."

"Angela! Where did you—" She pouted instantly. "Not just plain 'Angela'—put some trimming on it."

"Well—Angela, dear. . . . what's that about Jack Armstrong? Say that again—and tell me everything you know about it. Be serious for once. That's a good girl!"

Her eyes were mischievously tender; somehow she reminded Hilliard of that moment in the hallway of the Durants' house—the most precious of all his recent memories.

"Will you tell me if I tell you?" "Yes, I guess so." Her finger was upraised in warning.

"Say 'Yes, dear.'" "Yes, dear," said Hilliard, writhing. She settled herself with a little flourish of excitement.

"Well. . . . Jack asked her, and she refused him. . . . Flat as a pancake. That's gospel truth! She told me she'd refused him, and he told me the pancake part. And everybody's glad of it—he's a nice boy; awfully nice—but nowhere near as nice as you are. And he's just naturally gone away to get over it. And you're the only one left. So—that's finished."

He stared at her unblinkingly. Had he really been at such cross-purposes with Armstrong at the station, then? The conception was illuminating.

"Everybody?" he repeated, red and white by turns, and mightily hushed. "What does that mean?"

"Just that. Everybody. That is—Her accent was deliciously superior. "That is, all the people one knows."

"They think. . . . they think I'm the. . . . the one?" "Silly!" She patted his head. "I didn't believe you'd try to camouflage me. No—honestly—Isn't it true?"

He studied her a moment. "What would you say if it were?" he asked soberly.

She returned his gaze with engaging frankness. "Oh, I want it to be—I want it to be!" she said. "Carol's the sweetest thing in town, and as for you. . . . well, sometimes I almost wish I could marry you myself!"

His heart leaped dangerously. One complication the less! Oh, the respite of it! Angela removed from the prob-

lem—and he sank back wearily—Carol coming into it again, and irrevocably. "Almost?" he queried mechanically.

She looked at the floor; when she raised her eyes he saw the well-remembered depths in them. She was half-child, half-woman—and the woman was speaking with the child's tongue. Her hand covered his; the warm, timid pressure was very assuaging.

"Yes, 'almost' . . . I suppose I can really talk to you, can't I? I always thought I could. . . . well, when you first came here I was perfectly crazy about you. . . . I am yet, in a way, only sort of boiled down. . . . you know. Not like a sister at all, but. . . . not the other sort, either. I thought it was

going to be—once—but. . . . I. . . . I like you better than anybody else in the world—all but two. . . . I liked to be kissed by people I like. . . . and. . . . you know it's sort of like sunlight; I need lots of it. People have always fussed over me. . . . Here she gave a poignant sigh for her lost youth. "Only. . . . it's funny, too. . . . but one of the two people I do like better than I do you. . . . in a different way. . . . is. . . . is Rufe Waring. He's jealous as a. . . . a tom cat. . . . but somehow I don't mind it from him; I always like it. . . . He was so frightfully jealous about you, and I. . . . I teased him about that. It was just because he thought you weren't quite good enough for me, I guess. And you've got to give him credit for that, now, haven't you? . . . And. . . . I hope you and Carol'll be awfully happy together."

"Dear girl!" said Hilliard gently. "Do you understand?" Her eyes were very pleading, very misty. "Understand?—yes. Can I wish you happiness, too?"

"Not yet," she said, adorably prim. "He hasn't. . . . oh, we both know about it, but he's got to graduate from law school first, and—after that. . . . maybe I can. . . . travel a little." She blushed shamefully. "You needn't grin like a Cheshire cat—I guess I'll see Niagara Falls, anyway!"

"I wasn't grinning," he said. "I was smiling at you right out of my heart. . . . But I do wish happiness to you—always and always. And I'm happier myself than I've been for ages. . . . dear. . . ." He stopped, swamped by the recollection that it was Waring who was to share in the demonstration of his perfidy. To wish happiness to an executioner—and not to be a hypocrite? Incredible—yet true! Hilliard wished him happiness.

"What is it?" she demanded, alert to his altered expression. "Nothing. . . . I'm just sorry I'm not a Mormon!" "You're fibbing! Still. . . ." Hilliard rose hastily.

"Wait!" she said. "You can't go until you've told me one more thing. . . . you don't honestly think Rufe's underhanded, now, do you?" "No—oh, no, Angela. A man can be so upset that he can—"

"You know we were just shocked and surprised—and Dad's awfully quick tempered. And it was so sudden! We didn't stop to talk it over, we sailed right into him, and all of us got excited, and then you came in. We didn't know how frightfully jealous Rufe could be—he's been bad enough before, but this time was the limit—and it's only because he's a boy. It's. . . . sort of primeval. You know."

"Yes, dear—yes!" "And. . . . he did know us long before he ever knew you. He thought he was protecting us. It was just an obsession—"

"It's all right—quite all right. Please!" He touched her hair lightly. "I wish I were as sure you'd always defend me as I am that you'll stick to him, Angela."

"That's twice you've said that. . . . and you know what I think! I've told you. And. . . . are you going off without telling me anything at all?" Her voice betrayed the irreparable injury in it.

Hilliard moistened his lips. "Angela, dear, next to one other person I love you better than any one else on earth."

"That's nice," she said, with a sigh of perfect content. He bent to her, but she eluded him. "Oh, no!" she gasped in fluttering protest. "Even if you. . . . but I've told you about Rufe now—you haven't told me about Carol, but it's plain as day—it wouldn't be right!"

"Angela!" She relented swiftly; his voice was something to rely on. "Well—just my cheek, then. Honestly, I. . . ."

"No, dear," said Hilliard. He compelled her chin upward, and smiled down into her lovely, startled eyes, and stooped and kissed her forehead. . . . then her lips.

"That's for good-by," he said, "to the dearest little girl I ever knew. . . . We're both growing up, aren't we?"

CHAPTER XIII.

In the colorless days that followed, Hilliard listlessly set about the ordering of his final plans. Fortunately, there were few of them; his mind would never have been equal to intricate detail.

It was a slight consolation to him to realize that the city had a habit of judging men by personal rather than by financial standards; for all its pride and wealth, it would censure him more for his wrecked personality than for whatever money losses he had caused. He was prepared to endure that censure; and because he understood the provocation behind it, he was all the more eager to aid in the salvage. There would be more saved

from the underwriting project, he thought, than from his character.

He had deposited with Cullen all he owned, except for his private belongings, his runabout, and a trivial sum for current expenses. The runabout he would offer for sale; it meant a few hundred dollars more to be divided among his contributors. Beyond that, there was nothing else he could restore to them.

He didn't believe that Harmon would ever carry out his promised betrayal; not that he had faith in Harmon's code of ethics, but because he trusted Harmon's horse sense. If Hilliard were alone to be accused, Harmon would gain nothing and might, if he offered any adverse testimony, even implicate himself. Indeed, if Harmon should say enough to establish the proof in the dangerous status of an accessory before the fact. No. . . . this was the same procedure; to let

Presently he sensed a subtle supercharging of the atmosphere whenever he met a male acquaintance; he couldn't deny that the greeting of his bankers was suddenly less informal, more impersonal; he perceived, with a sinking spasm of foreboding, that fewer people stopped to chat with him on the street and that those who still were willing to halt and pass the time of day were uncommonly restive about it. Syracuse hadn't yet arrayed itself officially against him, and a part of Syracuse was outwardly as pleasant as ever, but there wasn't the slightest question that the story had leaked out, and that it had got itself adherents. The end was plainly in sight; Armstrong's report was due. Only the Cullens and the Durants and one or two other of the James street families were quite as cordially attentive as formerly; and to Hilliard's vast chagrin, they rather overdid it. . . . he seemed to feel in the steady warmth of their friendship a sort of blindly unseasonable resolution to support him, whether or no. This, infinitely more than the cooling manner of the majority, galled him incessantly. It was as though they rallied to his defense before the need of it. . . . It was as though they conceded in advance the necessity of such a defense.

So Hilliard waited, waited. . . . smiling upon the world his hollow smile, carrying through the city the body of a knave and the face of a martyr and the soul of a gentleman. . . . and in the wintches of the night, he was perplexed to find that his eyes were sometimes wet, but never when he was thinking of himself—always when he was thinking of Angela, or Carol, or—unexplainably—of a common-bourgeois representative of the French bourgeoisie named Pierre Dutout.

On the eighth day, he chanced to meet Dr. Durant by accident in front of the Physicians' building at high noon. "Hello, there! You're just in time," said the Doctor, cheerfully. "I'm going over to the University club for lunch. Won't you join me? I want your advice. I'm the worst business man in the world—you probably know that by this time. And I trust my friends for friendship; but when I want advice, I go to an expert. So you qualify on both counts. Come along over."

Hilliard was flattered, but not deceived. "I'm not sure that my advice is worth anything half as expensive as a luncheon, Doctor."

The older man took him by the arm, and impelled him across the street. "That depends on your appetite," he laughed. "Come along, and help me out on a decision I've got to make. About an investment."

Hilliard hung back for a moment, while suspicion dawned on him. "What sort of investment, Doctor?" he queried.

"You come and sit down," urged the Doctor, seductively. "And we'll talk it over later. But first of all—" He patted his waistcoat. "Let's eat."

Hilliard was almost too grateful to speak; the Doctor's stratagem was patent, but in all civility the invitation couldn't be declined. Once inside the doors of the club, however, he became panicky; for his first sweeping reconnaissance included half a dozen men whose late behavior had indicated that they knew.

The Doctor drew Hilliard under the mantle of his own unassailable position, and plowed ahead with the utmost serenity. He nodded here and there, he spoke to members right and left; he bowed across the room; always his personality, rather than his person, seemed to be escorting and guarding Hilliard; and Syracuse couldn't decline to acknowledge a man who was under the Doctor's adequate protection. Those who spoke to the Doctor also spoke to Hilliard; there was no way out of it, and they spoke as casually as they could. They also nodded to him, and bowed, but when his back was turned, they became low-voiced and communicative, and he knew it.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Divers in Ancient History.

The earliest mention of diving is made by Homer, about 850 B. C., in the "Iliad," when Patroclus compares the fall of Hector's charioteer to a diver diving for oysters; and Thucydides tells of divers being used to remove submarine barriers placed with the object of impeding or injuring the Grecian fleet at the siege of Syracuse. These divers had no apparatus save a stone to carry them quickly to the bottom and to cling to for the brief period, about two minutes, they could stay below. This is called natural diving and is still in use for collecting sponges and pearls at Ceylon and in the Mediterranean.

Short Answer.

Tenderfoot Scout (to second-class scout who has just had his hair cut)—How is it that your hair is so short—did you have it cut?

Second-class Scout—No, I washed my head last night and my hair shrunk.—Boys' Life.

Home Town Helps

"MAKING OVER" OLD HOUSES

Architects Have Shown That They Can Do Wonders With Present Unightly Structures.

There never was a time when the services, taste and special knowledge of the trained architect were more needed or more in demand. The carpenter and builder have for years been the consulting experts in the building of thousands of suburban homes and farmhouses, and let us give them credit, at least, before the jigsaw era, for many beautiful and charming old houses.

Following the building shortage in these latter years has come an appreciation of the fact that any old house, or new, be it as hopelessly ugly as it may be, has possibilities. Architecture has shown many instances of "before and after" of old ramshackle, barnlike structures, altered into most delightful homes. Old barns have been made over into charming studios and living quarters, woodsheds incorporated into the redesigning of an old farmhouse. Everywhere is shown a wider appreciation that nothing is impossible to the architect of taste and skill.

The old and hopelessly ugly city brown-stone house and the little two or three-story brick house or stable on a side street have been made into artistic and attractive apartments or studio buildings.

It is to the architect that we owe this renaissance and we have only made a beginning toward the development of the city beautiful from old and unsightly and out-of-date structures. Lest some should say that we are dealing with merely idealistic matters, with our own desire for better things artistically, we remark that in every instance these "artistic" improvements have proved the very best of business in increased rents and more desirable tenants.

If the cost of new buildings has deterred many from carrying out their long-cherished dream of owning their own home, there is abundant opportunity almost everywhere for the alteration of old places at very moderate cost. And old houses nearly always offer the nucleus of a more substantial structure than many hurriedly built modern houses put up in quantities for speculative purposes.—From Architecture.

CITY'S BILLBOARDS MUST GO

Cincinnati Commissioner Prepares for the Removal of Signs, Under a Court Order.

Orders for the removal of all billboards from the residential sections of Cincinnati are being prepared by George E. Hauser, city building commissioner, according to the Christian Science Monitor. Commissioner Hauser's action is based on a recent decision by a judge of the Common Pleas court, that the municipal ordinance restricting billboards is retroactive. This ordinance requires a petition containing the consent of 51 per cent of the property owners in any residential block before a permit for the erection of a billboard may be granted. The judge held that this regulation applied to billboards erected before the passage of the ordinance. Commissioner Hauser points out that under this interpretation the residents of each block have it in their power to rid themselves of objectionable billboards by refusing to sign the consent petitions which the billboard interests are hurriedly circulating.

Importance of Trees.

When we have once had our interest in trees awakened and have considered their various uses and helpfulness to man, we are glad to learn something of their ways and how their troubles may be remedied. Trees help to keep the soil in place on hillsides. They hold to its course the wayward brook. They furnish shelter, shade and cozy nesting-places for the birds; we should have few little feathered friends if it were not for trees. They are companionable, and like to grow where they can get branches with their fellows; they give a refreshing shade in the summer and protection in the winter, and they have character and individuality. It is well worth our while to save them from destruction, as well as to help restore the forests which have been ruthlessly cut down.

Good Advice.

An aged Scot told his minister that he was about to make a pilgrimage to the Holy land. "And when I'm there," said the pilgrim complacently, "I'll read the Ten Commandments aloud frae the top o' Mt. Sinai." The minister looked at him with an eye of pity, and said: "Sandy, tak' my advice: Bide at hame and keep them."

Traced Source of Seaweed.

When the Sargasso sea was first discovered it was thought that the seaweed grew on the bottom of the ocean right on the spot. We know better now. The algae, whose scientific name by the way is fucus natans, has its origin on the rocks of South America and Bahama Islands. Vast forests of the algae grow on these tropic coasts.